

# Chronic Disease Connections

An e-bulletin created for healthcare systems working with patients to control their diabetes and high blood pressure.

## Health Promotion is Newsworthy . . .

### **Calling obesity a “disease” may affect how obese individuals view the condition.**

The Huffington Post (1/30) reports that research published “in the journal *Psychological Science* suggests” labeling obesity a disease “could affect how people who are obese view health-focused dieting and weight.” Researchers “found that obese study participants who read” an “article about obesity being a disease were less likely than others to report concern about weight or health-focused dieting, were more likely to choose a high-calorie option from a provided menu, and were more likely to report greater body satisfaction.” The article points out that “the American Medical Association voted last June to recognize obesity as a disease.”

### **Groups release stroke-prevention guidelines for women.**

The release of new stroke-prevention guidelines for women was covered by two national news broadcasts, for a total of four minutes, in three major US newspapers, and by several wires and websites. The CBS Evening News (2/6, story 8, 1:50, Pelley) reported that “guidelines for preventing strokes in women” have been released.

On NBC Nightly News (2/6, story 8, 2:15, Williams), NBC’s Tom Costello said, “Among the greatest risk factors, especially for women,” is “high blood pressure.”

The Wall Street Journal (2/7, Winslow, Subscription Publication) reports that the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association released the guidelines, which are published in the journal, *Stroke*.

The Washington Post (2/7, Sun) reports that the guidelines “emphasize the importance of controlling blood pressure, especially in young women.” The guidelines also suggest that “women should be screened for high blood pressure before taking birth-control pills, because the combination raises stroke risks.”

Additionally, reports USA Today (2/6, Hellmich) reports, “women who have migraine headaches with aura should stop smoking to avoid higher stroke risks.” Meanwhile, “women over age 75 should be screened for atrial fibrillation risks due to its link to higher stroke risk.”

Bloomberg News (2/7, Ostrow) reports that the guidelines also indicate that “preeclampsia should be considered a risk factor for stroke later in life.” Additionally, the “research...suggests that doctors treat women with high blood pressure prior to pregnancy to lower their risk of developing preeclampsia.”

On its website, CNN (2/7, Wade) reports that while “diabetes, depression, and emotional stress are additional stroke risk factors more common in women than men...because treatment options are similar between the sexes, there are no new recommendations in the stroke guidelines.”

## What’s new about



## Better Choices, Better Health

*Put Life Back in Your Life*



### **What Makes the Better Choices, Better Health Workshops Effective?**

Better Choices, Better Health (also known as the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program, or CDSMP) helps adults manage the symptoms of chronic diseases. What makes the Better Choices, Better Health workshops effective is the process in which the program is taught. Classes are highly participative, where mutual support and success build the participants’ confidence in their ability to manage their health and maintain active and fulfilling lives.

Better Choices, Better Health workshops will not conflict with existing programs or treatments. They are designed to enhance regular treatment and disease-specific education. In addition, many participants have more than one chronic condition. The program is especially helpful for these individuals, as it gives them skills to coordinate all the things needed to manage their health, as well as to help keep them active.

Go to <http://idph.state.ia.us/betterchoicesbetterhealth> to find a program in your community. Refer your patients with chronic diseases and assist them to better manage their diseases.

# Chronic Disease Connections

## Million Hearts™ Initiative Update



### More Americans Getting High Blood Pressure Under Control: CDC

Almost two-thirds of those enrolled in health plans have been properly treated, but more must be done.

### CDC Snapshot: Blood Pressure in the U.S.

### Hypertension takes center stage in JAMA Issue

During American Heart Month, the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA) released a special spotlight issue that shines a light on hypertension.

### Study: Sunlight may help lower blood pressure

On its website, *NBC News* (1/18, Fox) reported that research published in the *Journal of Investigative Dermatology* indicated that "just 20 minutes of ultraviolet A (UVA) sunlight lowered blood pressure by a small but significant amount in 24 volunteers."

## The latest on the ABCS...

### A1c

### A1c Patient Education Tool

This bilingual tool, developed by the Migrant Clinicians Network (MCN), educates patients about blood glucose management and the A1c test. It has a visual illustration of A1c levels categorized as "danger", "caution" and "success!" as well as pictorial representations of body parts that can be damaged by high glucose levels and a space for outlining self-management goals. The MCN Website has additional resources in bilingual format—so check it out!



### Aspirin Use

### Low-Dose Aspirin Ups Survival in Heart Failure: Community-Based Cohort Study

Daily low-dose aspirin, defined as 75 mg/day, was followed by a 42% mortality reduction over several years in a cohort of patients participating in a heart-failure disease-management program. Aspirin prolonged survival regardless of whether patients had a standard aspirin indication, such as ischemic heart disease, peripheral vascular disease, or stroke, reported investigators in their study, published online February 3, 2014 in *Circulation: Heart Failure*. There was no such survival benefit, however, at dosages higher than 75 mg/day, although both low- and higher-dose aspirin improved heart-failure hospitalizations. [Will require registration at no cost to access Medscape, unless already registered]

## Blood Pressure Control and Management

### JAMA Highlights: Blood pressure changes before middle age may affect the risk for developing heart disease

A new study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* examines whether blood pressure changes between early adulthood and middle age are associated with risk for developing heart disease. Watch a video in *AMA Wire*.

### Study: Early onset of HBP predicts risk of future of atherosclerosis

Pattern of higher blood pressure in early adulthood helps predict risk of atherosclerosis in middle age.

### AHA Instructions for taking BP at home

AHA has good directions for patients who are taking BP at home for reporting to their physician or pharmacist. They can also take advantage of the American Heart Association's BP tracking tool: Heart360 allows them to track their blood pressure and the steps to take to manage it online. They can print their readings to take or fax to their provider. This online tool also works on Microsoft's Health Vault personal health record storage system, which allows the patient to share their data with their provider electronically. Or, if they prefer to record BP readings on paper, they can download and print out a Blood Pressure Tracker.

Continued on the next page...

# Chronic Disease Connections

## Cholesterol Control and Management



### Controlling Blood Pressure, Cholesterol May Not Boost Brain Health for Diabetics

It's well known that having type 2 diabetes can increase a person's chances of impaired memory and thinking. But a new study suggests that intensive treatment of blood pressure and cholesterol levels in people with diabetes won't help lower that risk.

#### Statins for 'Healthy' People?

If I have low cholesterol and no other risk factors for heart disease that I know of, should I be taking a statin?

See Dr. Arthur Agatston's answer »

## Smoking Cessation



### The American Lung Association has released its *State of Tobacco Control 2014*

This 12th annual report highlighting the "urgent need for {the} nation to renew its commitment to eliminate tobacco-caused death and disease." The report, "tracks yearly progress on key tobacco control policies at the federal and state level, assigning grades based on whether laws protect Americans from the enormous toll tobacco use takes on lives and the economy."

#### CVS ends tobacco sales in JAMA announcement

CVS Caremark's landmark decision to end the sale of tobacco products in its stores was announced Wednesday in the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*, an appropriate outlet given the AMA's 50 years of anti-tobacco efforts. Read more in *AMA Wire™*.



## Pre-diabetes and Diabetes News . . .

### MyDiabetesHome: Online Diabetes tracking tools

Developed by Iowa physician, Anuj Bhargava, MD, MBA, CDE, FACP, FACE, CEO-My Diabetes Home, LLC, MyDiabetesHome is a personalized diabetes management and blood sugar monitoring and tracking platform that provides patients with tools to track blood sugar, provider visits, vital signs and manage medications. The interactive dashboard, easily accessible via computer, tablet or mobile device, allows patients to simplify their lives while improving provider visits.

#### Resources for Diabetes Educators and Care Givers

Diabetes - Meal Planning (Patient Education Institute); also available in Spanish  
Tasty Recipes for People with Diabetes and Their Families (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) - PDF

Counting carbohydrates; also available in Spanish

Diabetes diet - type 2; also available in Spanish

Snacking when you have diabetes; also available in Spanish

Sweeteners – artificial; also available in Spanish



## Place these Health Observations on Your Upcoming Calendar . . . Plan for Awareness Activities at your Clinic !

### March

Brain Injury Awareness Month [www.biausa.org](http://www.biausa.org)

National Kidney Month [www.kidney.org](http://www.kidney.org)

National Nutrition Month [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)

Save Your Vision Month [www.preventblindness.org](http://www.preventblindness.org)

March 2-8: Patient Safety Awareness Week

[www.npsf.org/events-forums/patient-safety-awareness-week/](http://www.npsf.org/events-forums/patient-safety-awareness-week/)

**March 25: American Diabetes Association Alert Day®**

<http://www.diabetes.org/are-you-at-risk/alert-day/>

### April

Foot Health Awareness Month [www.apma.org](http://www.apma.org)

Minority Health Month [www.minorityhealth.hhs.gov/](http://www.minorityhealth.hhs.gov/)

April 6-13: Healthcare Volunteer Week [www.hahrp.org](http://www.hahrp.org)

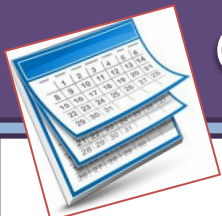
April 7-13: Public Health Week [www.nphw.org](http://www.nphw.org)

April 7: World Health Day [www.who.int/world-health-day/en/](http://www.who.int/world-health-day/en/)

April 20-26 Healthcare Administrative Professionals Week  
[www.ahcap.org](http://www.ahcap.org)

**AND** honor those that make us laugh!:

**National Humor Month** [www.humormonth.com](http://www.humormonth.com)



# Chronic Disease Connections

## Upcoming Training for Healthcare Providers

**Meaningful Use and Patient Encounters** CME/CE This activity is intended for physicians, nurses, and other healthcare providers participating in or considering the EHR Incentive Programs. The goal of this activity is to describe meaningful use requirements that affect communication between providers and patients. Upon completion of this activity, participants will be able to: Interpret measurement objectives in the EHR Incentive Programs that require patient-clinician communication and propose mechanisms that a practice can use to improve EHR-facilitated patient communication.

### **Atrial Fibrillation and Stroke: Continuum of Care**

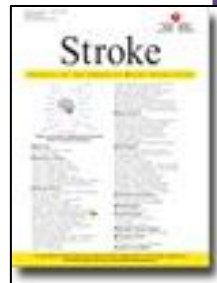
In collaboration with WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease, developed a three-part webinar series to help patients learn the signs and symptoms of Afib, how to manage stroke risk, what to do if someone has a stroke, who should be part of the healthcare team and the premise of effective rehab. Patients can learn at their own pace and gain specific knowledge for personal needs. [View the series now.](#)



## New Resources for Healthcare Providers

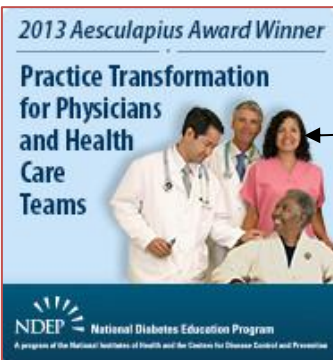
### **Risk Adjustment of Ischemic Stroke Outcomes for Comparing Hospital Performance**

This statement gives an overview of the science of approaching risk adjustment for evaluating hospital level care of stroke patients. Including: Benefits, limitations, and the potential unintended consequences of risk adjustment or inadequate risk adjustment. Recommendations on variables that should be included in risk adjustment are featured. [Read the full article in Stroke](#) [Stroke. 2014; published online ahead of print January 23, 2014. Stroke. doi: 10.1161/01.str.0000441948.35804.77]



### **Primary Care Practices Can Develop Quality Improvement Infrastructures, starting with Workflow mapping**

*The Practice Facilitation Handbook: Training Modules for New Facilitators and Their Trainers* defines workflow as a series of steps that accomplishes a particular task. In other words, workflows show how the work actually gets done. The process of workflow mapping involves documenting the specific steps and actions needed to accomplish a particular task. By helping practices map workflows, facilitators can make it easier to improve processes to increase efficiency, reduce errors, and improve outcomes in primary care practices.



### **Practice Transformation for Physicians and Health Care Teams**

The NDEP's "Practice Transformation for Physicians and Health Care Teams" resource is designed for health care professionals and administrators who want to change systems of health care delivery around diabetes.

### **Resources on Managing Multiple Chronic Conditions**

More than a quarter of all Americans - and two out of three older Americans - are estimated to have at least two chronic physical or behavioral health problems. Treatment for people living with MCC accounts for about 66% of the Nation's health care costs. As the U.S. population ages, the number of patients with MCC continues to grow. This challenge has become a major public health issue due to its link to suboptimal health outcomes and rising health care costs. For resources on MCC, take a look at the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's page.

## The Iowa Department of Public Health -- Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Control Partnership



This e-Bulletin is supported by Cooperative Agreement Number 1U58DP004807-01 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the Iowa Department of Public Health.

Editors:

**Terry Y. Meek**  
Health Systems Coordinator  
[terry.meek@idph.iowa.gov](mailto:terry.meek@idph.iowa.gov)

**Laurene Hendricks**  
Linkage Coordinator  
[laurene.hendricks@idph.iowa.gov](mailto:laurene.hendricks@idph.iowa.gov)